

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 5, 2014

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: T&ES STAFF

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 2 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. FUNDING UPDATE

VDOT is proceeding with a study to rate transportation projects, as required by HB599. The results of this study will inform the decisions regarding NVT A 70% funding, particularly for road projects (Under HB2313, transit capacity projects do not need to be rated). VDOT reached out to jurisdictions and stakeholders in December 2013 and January 2014 to get feedback on the proposed selection methodology. Meetings were held in January to discuss the model that will be used in the study and the proposed measures of effectiveness. In February 2014, VDOT will report to the CTB on its progress. A call for projects for the HB599 study is also anticipated in February. NVT A is planning to submit the roadway projects received as part of its call for projects for 70% funds to VDOT for the HB599 study.

B. NVT A 70% FUNDS

On December 12, 2013, NVT A released a call for projects for 70% funds for FY 2015 – FY 2016. The City's proposed project list and ten-year plan was endorsed by the Transportation Commission on January 8, 2014. City Council reviewed the FY 2015 – FY 2016 proposal at its January 14 legislative meeting, as well as the City's 10-year plan. Council asked that the \$16 million that had been allocated to the Real Time Adaptive Traffic Management system in FY 2017 be reallocated. Per Council's direction, that \$16 million has been split between the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station and the Corridor "C" project in FY 2017. No changes were made to the FY2015 – FY 2016 proposal, which is outlined below.

FY 2015 - FY 2016 Project Submission for NVT A 70 Percent Funds

	FY 2015	FY 2016
▪ Potomac Yard Metrorail Station	\$500,000	\$1,000,000
▪ Transit Corridor 'B' - Duke Street	\$190,000	\$0
▪ Transit Corridor 'C' - Beauregard	\$0	\$2,400,000
▪ Real Time Traffic Adaptive Control	\$500,000	\$0
TOTAL	\$1,190,000	\$3,400,000

C. POTOMAC YARD METRORAIL STATION

The Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project is an infill Metrorail station located between the National Airport and Braddock Road Metrorail stations on the Blue and Yellow lines in the vicinity of the Potomac Yard Development.

The project team is working on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), which analyzes the socioeconomic, environmental, and transportation impacts of a no build and three build alternatives. The DEIS will address key environmental considerations, including air quality and climate change, transportation and land use, visual resources, parklands, historic and cultural resources, noise, vibration, wetlands and habitats, and temporary construction impacts.

As discussed previously, the project team has been investigating several options to mitigate impacts identified during the DEIS analysis. One of these options involves moving the CSXT tracks to the west, which would potentially allow Alternative B to be removed from NPS-owned land and the 1999 scenic easement. City staff met with representatives of CSXT on November 13, 2013. The City expects to hear from CSXT by early spring whether CSXT is interested in proceeding further.

The viability of this mitigation option rests on financial feasibility and the willingness of CSXT to move its tracks. This mitigation option is likely to cost tens of millions more than Alternative B due to the cost of land acquisition, construction inflation, the cost of track relocation, and utility costs (there are likely unknown utilities within the CSXT right-of-way). The CSXT option is anticipated to result in significant delay because moving the tracks would likely add a year to the construction schedule and construction would likely not start until after the end of the movie theater lease in December 2018.

While the City awaits a reply from CSXT, staff is revisiting the financial analysis. Staff is also studying other mitigation strategies, such as additional landscaping to screen views of the station from the George Washington Memorial Parkway and a potential design speed modification that would allow the track for Alternative B to be moved out of NPS-owned land. Pending discussions with CSXT, staff expects to resume work on the DEIS in April and incorporate these mitigation options into the document.

The Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group (PYMIG) met on January 6, 2014 to discuss the progress of the DEIS. Based on their feedback, City staff has prepared a projected schedule to complete the EIS. Assuming revision of the DEIS to incorporate mitigation options begins in April, staff anticipates release of the document for public review and comment in Fall 2014.

For more information on the project, please visit www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyard.

D. CRYSTAL CITY/POTOMAC YARD (ROUTE 1) TRANSITWAY

During the first round of TIGER grants, the City received \$8.5 million to design and construct the Route 1 Transitway between Monroe Avenue and East Glebe Road. The City compiled additional grant funding and \$5.2 million in local funding to design/construct various elements of the Transitway project. The total cost of the Transitway including

vehicles is approximately \$20 million.

Transitway construction began in July 2012. Runningway construction is substantially complete. Pre-construction meetings for the landscaping and stations were held in January. Excavation for the landscaping is underway, with planting due to start in early March, depending on weather. Installation of the concrete platforms for the stations is due to start in February. The project will be complete in Summer 2014.

The branded Metroway service will start with the opening of the Transitway, with buses running every 12 minutes between the Braddock Road Metrorail Station and Pentagon City. The service will operate in mixed traffic through Arlington County until early 2015, when their portion of the transitway is scheduled to open.

For more information on the Route 1 Transitway project please see visit:

<http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=58644>

E. LOWER KING STREET PEDESTRIAN STUDY

The City began the Lower King Street Pedestrian Study in January 2014. The purpose of the study is to analyze and identify impacts associated with converting the 100 block (Union to Lee Streets) of King Street to a pedestrian plaza. The study will identify traffic and circulation improvements, operational and maintenance needs, an implementation timetable and process, and budgetary requirements to convert the 100 block of King Street into a pedestrian plaza accessible to the public to enjoy as a meeting and gathering place, and for dining, shopping, and a range of programmed activities. The study will be coordinated with the other projects in the vicinity including the Unit block of King Street. The estimated duration of the design project is six (6) months for completion. The study will include an analysis of circulation (vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle), trolley access, bus (including tour bus) circulation and pick up/drop off, loading access, parking (on-street, garage access, valet, passenger drop off/pick-up areas), and emergency vehicle access.

An early task will be to identify the existing conditions, including a level of service analysis of the fifteen intersections within the study area, and inventory of the existing pedestrian, bicycle, transit, parking, and loading conditions and issues. Civic engagement will also be a key component of the study will include public outreach, including outreach to the business community, resident stakeholder groups, the Transportation Commission, Planning Commission, Waterfront Commission, and Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Group. A walkabout with business representatives, and focus group meetings are anticipated to be held in early March, as well as a public open house meeting. Staff anticipates bringing an update to the Commission in March 2014 to identify key issues and needs.

F. PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

It is anticipated that the City will begin the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update, and development of the Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual in March, 2014. The City completed both the Transportation Master Plan, and a Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan in 2008 which is data rich and serves as an implementation tool for the Transportation Master Plan. Since that time, staff has completed many important projects to improve walking and bicycling in the City, and many more are currently underway.

In 2011, the City adopted a Complete Streets Policy which expanded staff to include a full time Complete Streets Coordinator, and initiated a Capital Bikeshare Program (Bikeshare Program), both of which continue to expand citywide. Given the many pedestrian and bicycle projects and initiatives completed over the past five years, including the Bikeshare Program, as well as the adoption of the Complete Streets Policy, the City will undertake an effort to incorporate these additions into an updated Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and development of a Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual.

The purpose of this update to the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and development of a Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual will be to:

- Develop a non-motorized system that addresses the needs of all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and transit riders) and is consistent with the Transportation Master Plan that encourages transportation options, reducing dependence on the private automobile;
- Develop both a bicycle and pedestrian network and hierarchy, based on identification of major activity centers or destinations (including existing and projected development and Metrorail and fixed transit stations); and
- Develop a framework for implementing non-motorized policies and projects citywide

In developing the bicycle and pedestrian networks hierarchy and framework, the following principles and objectives will be considered:

- Respect the character of existing neighborhoods
- Balance needs of all users
- Identify existing and future bicycle parking areas, pedestrian and bicycle way-finding opportunities, and innovative on-street bicycle facilities (such as cycle tracks, bicycle boulevards, etc.)
- Develop criteria to prioritize public pedestrian and bicycle improvements
- Identify and resolve key gaps in the walking and bicycling network; and
- Raise the City's "Bicycle Friendly Community" and a "Walk Friendly Community" award level to Platinum (The City was recently named a Silver level Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) by the League of American Bicyclists, recognizing the City's commitment to improving conditions for bicycling through investment in education and safety programs, bicycling promotion, and infrastructure)
- Plan for Bikeshare expansion

Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual

A separate Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual will be prepared to provide guidance to staff and citizens on design tools and methodologies for ensuring City roads address all users. The Design Manual will establish standards or guidelines to implement the City's April 2011 Complete Streets policy that roadway projects will safely accommodate all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, persons with disabilities and motor vehicles. The Design Manual will take into account existing city design guidelines and standards.

The Design Manual will include progressive design guidelines and technical guidance on

construction, rebuilding, repair and rehabilitation of City streets with the intent of prioritizing users consistent with the Transportation Master Plan. The Design Manual will also provide citizens the tools and information needed to engage in constructive conversations about solving local traffic problems with City staff. It should provide multi-modal street design options for various types of roadways.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee

A Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee will be appointed to provide guidance on the project, and will be responsible for reviewing and providing comment on key deliverables, and providing input on project recommendations. Larger community meetings will complement the Advisory Committee work, focusing on visioning, issue identification, and the Plan framework. Online engagement will play an integral role in receiving input, updating the public on the progression of the planning process, and providing a platform for polling, comments, and feedback on specific questions.

The Advisory Committee will include twelve representatives, including one member of the Transportation Commission. The Committee will provide recommendations during the Update of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual planning process. The Committee's main role will be to provide guidance on issues including:

- Identifying pedestrian and bicycle issues and needs
- Providing input on policy recommendations
- Providing input on the development of the pedestrian and bicycle networks
- Providing input on project recommendations and design standards
- Providing input on development of criteria for prioritizing project recommendations

The Committee will also receive community input during a series of community wide meetings and online engagement. Staff will update the Council at its February 11, 2014 meeting on the project, including a resolution to establish the Advisory Committee.